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# Opinion: The Liberals are becoming a climate cult

*Proposed Clean Fuel Standard is a second carbon tax that will lead to as many as 30,000 job losses nationally*

Dan McTeague, Special to Financial Post

Published Oct 07, 2020 • Last updated Oct 07, 2020 • 3 minute read

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The Trudeau government's green agenda is making life less affordable through a growing burden of taxes, regulations, job losses and business destruction. PHOTO BY BLAIR GABLE/REUTERS FILES

The conversation around climate change arguably has been irrational since it began decades ago, but the irrationality has only become more and more deeply imbedded — perhaps nowhere more than here in Canada, with the current Liberal government and its latest initiative, the Clean Fuel Standard.

Full disclosure: for 18 years I was a Liberal member of Parliament, and a very active one. But the Liberal party I knew was a very different party from the one running the country today. Today's Liberals are seized with an irrational obsession on the climate file. Climate change trumps any other concern, excluding the pandemic. Last month's throne speech made that clear yet again, complete with ludicrous claims about how the government will create "a million jobs" and calls for "taxes on pollution" and commitments to race towards "net zero carbon" by 2050, come hell or high water.

Some might say we have a state religion in Canada and it is called climate. But my experience with religion is that it is rational — and this obsession isn't. What we have is a cult of climate. Cults are powerful and grip the imagination of the people they entrap. But eventually common sense from reasonable voices can prevail and the extremists can be exposed for what they are.

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At Canadians for Affordable Energy we are working hard to speak out against the irrationality of the current climate obsession and be a reasonable voice that defends the interests of everyday Canadians. Those Canadians are finding life is less and less affordable. They are being ground down by the growing burden of taxes and regulations and the resultant job losses and business destruction coming from the Trudeau government's green agenda, with virtually no offsetting benefit — to either the environment or our society.

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The latest manifestation of the government's climate obsession is the Clean Fuel Standard (CFS). According to the government's proposal, the CFS aims to limit the carbon intensity of all regulated fuels over their life cycle, from extraction to production through to end use, in order to achieve a 30-megatonne reduction in national carbon emissions by 2030. To do so, the Liberals will impose emissions constraints on all forms of fossil fuels, from oil, coal and natural gas to diesel and gasoline, forcing producers to either find costly technologies to meet the target or pay credits to comply with the regulations. For this reason we have dubbed the CFS a "second carbon tax" because in its effect, it amounts to taxation: it is an additional government-imposed financial burden that the customer will pay. True, it is indirect, rather than direct, so Canadians will not see it show up as a line item on an energy bill in the way other carbon taxes do. But they will see its impacts nonetheless. And those impacts will be profound.

Research we have commissioned and just released shows exactly how profound. Our analysis concludes the proposed CFS will lead to as many as 30,000 job losses nationally, putting in the order of \$22 billion of capital at risk of exiting the country in order to avoid investment losses. All this to drive an agenda of radical redesign: to get Canada off the use of some of the most affordable, reliable resources performing to some of the highest environmental standards on the planet.

This year has been an especially tough one for Canadians. Millions are still out of work. Millions more have been left isolated without the support of their communities, schools and families. Canadians are feeling the financial, social and emotional costs of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns imposed by

governments. The Trudeau government is making the situation worse with its green agenda and specific initiatives like the so-called Clean Fuel Standard.

*Dan McTeague is president of Canadians for Affordable Energy. He was a Liberal MP from 1993 to 2011, serving as the party's consumer and consular affairs critic.*



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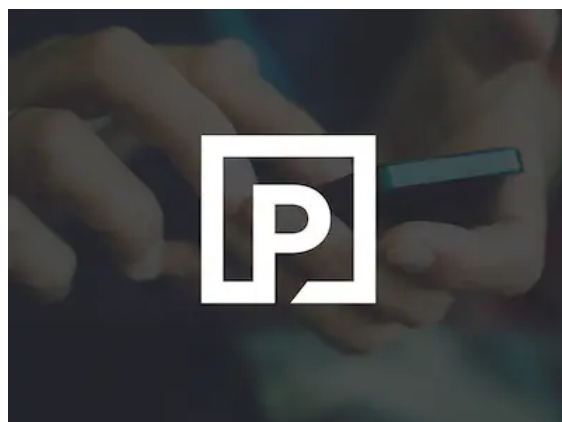
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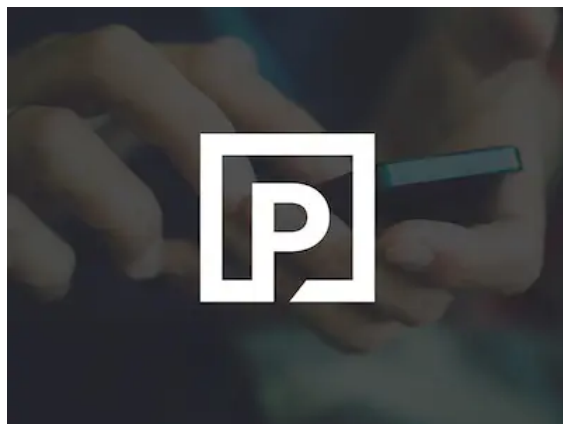
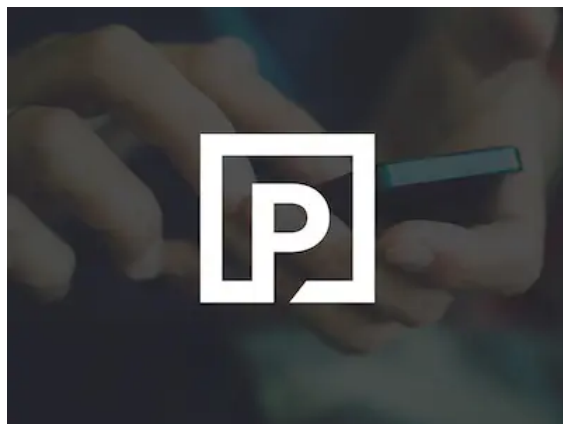
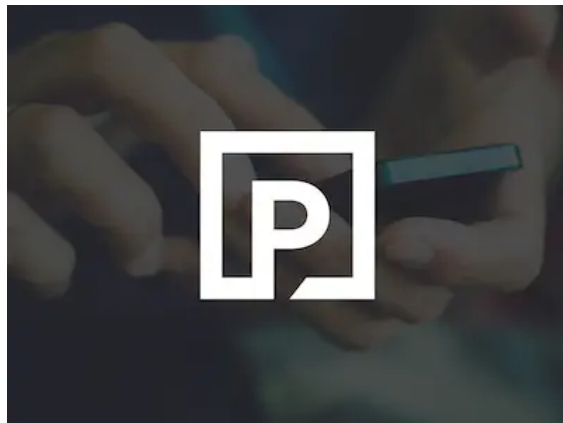
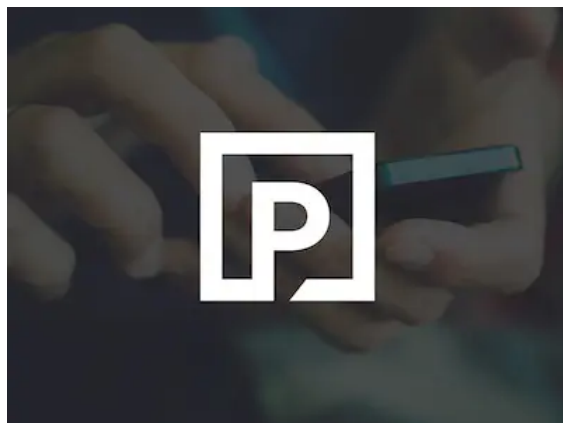
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